

Congressman Secured Funds to Make Local National Guard Base More Secure and Energy Efficient; ANG Project Will Serve as a Model for Military Installations across the Country

Newburgh, NY- Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY), officials from The Solar Energy Consortium (TSEC) and its partners, and representatives from Stewart Air National Guard (ANG) base today announced a new \$4 million dollar federal investment that will pay for the construction of a solar farm at the base. Hinchey directly secured the funds from Congress as part of the fiscal year 2010 Defense Appropriations bill, which has been signed into law.

"The Hudson Valley is leading the way on the development and practical use of solar products across our region and the country," Hinchey said. "This project demonstrates how solar energy can be used right now to make our military installations more secure, cost-effective, energy efficient, and environmentally sound. The solar farm project at Stewart Air National Guard base will serve as a model for other military installations across the country and demonstrate that on-base use of solar panels is a cost effective solution that will allow the Department of Defense -- the world's number one consumer of energy -- to become much more energy efficient and dramatically less dependent on the use of fossil fuels."

Over the life of the solar farm, the project will save taxpayer money, make Stewart ANG base more secure, and enable the facility to become more energy independent. Once completed, the solar farm at Stewart ANG base will serve as a model for other military installations across the country. Congress and the Pentagon have set new requirements that each branch of the military must purchase or generate a minimum of 25 percent of the energy they consume from renewable sources by 2025.

The Stewart Air National Guard base solar farm, which will be the largest solar initiative in the Hudson Valley, will create approximately 10-20 jobs during the yearlong construction build out period. TSEC will serve as the program manager to build the solar farm utilizing Applied Materials thin-film solar PV technology. Applied Materials is a global leader in building the tool sets used to manufacture solar panels. It is anticipated that the solar farm will provide a significant portion of the daylight electrical power needs for the Stewart Air National Guard facility -- roughly the amount of power needed for 100 average-sized four bedroom homes.

"The Stewart Air National Guard Solar farm will provide clean grid free power to Stewart and

also serve as a catalyst toward growing the military and commercial market for the solar PV industry in New York and across the United States," said TSEC President Vincent Cozzolino.

Brigadier General Verle L. Johnston, Jr., base commander at the Stewart Air National Guard facility said, "On behalf of Stewart Air National Guard base we want to thank Congressman Hinchey for securing the funding to construct this solar farm, which allows us to generate electrical power right on the base and play a constructive role in achieving overall U.S. Air Force mandates to purchase or generate 25 percent of the energy the Air Force consumes from renewable sources by 2025."

According to a 2008 Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force report on energy strategy, about 85 percent of energy infrastructure upon which the military depends is commercially owned and 99 percent of it resides outside installation gates. Most of this capability is connected to the national grid which is aging and vulnerable to natural disasters and intentional attack. As a result, military installations are susceptible to not being able to carry out mission-critical functions in the event of a long-term grid outage. Most installation back-up generation systems are diesel-powered generators that are neither environmentally friendly nor viable long-term back-up solutions.

"This project can also serve as a model for schools, hospitals, and other buildings that are looking to become much more energy efficient and cost effective," Hinchey said. "The investments we've made in the solar energy industry in New York are paying off in significant ways, and this solar farm project at Stewart Air National Guard base is just the latest example."

Hinchey has now secured more than \$31 million in federal funds for TSEC and its partners. The congressman helped organize and create TSEC in 2007. The consortium is an industry-driven, non-profit organization that provides leadership, organization, resources, and support for the establishment of a major solar energy industry cluster in New York. The consortium has partnered with more than 70 small and large companies, including nearly a dozen that have already created 200 jobs in the Hudson Valley and collectively plan to bring more than 1,000 new jobs to upstate New York within the next few years.